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THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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I *To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;*

II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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The Tao which can be expressed in words is not the eternal Tao; the name which can be uttered is not its eternal name. —*The Tao Te King*

THEOSOPHY

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UNITY, STUDY, WORK

UNITY, in Theosophy, is not a confining bond, but grows from feeling the uniting power of a common ideal. Study assures that this feeling will be informed by timeless philosophical ideas, never being allowed to diminish to merely personal attractions. Work is at root a practical concern for the needs of others; it is founded on respect for the potentialities of others, not on a desire to "convert" anyone.

There is a sense in which H.P.B. wrote out of a matrix of thought which was unmistakably her own, yet which was also continuous with the immemorial matrix of knowledge she spoke of as the Wisdom Religion. We find a similar consistency in the writings of William Q. Judge, who also expounds out of awareness of ancient philosophy, yet at the same time has a characteristic way of thinking and speaking which belonged to him. And there are those who discern a similar quality in the work of Robert Crosbie.

It is this sense of balance and proportion—of the *symmetry* of the philosophy—which every student seeks to acquire, so that what he thinks or says may carry the conviction of this thought, yet suffer no distortion from having an individual expression. To be saturated with the ideas and forms of speech of the teachers is the best possible safeguard in this—reason enough for constant study of their writings. Yet a mechanical repetition, an imitative fidelity, is not the ideal, but rather a gradual absorption of the *point of view* represented by what they wrote.

Ancient scriptures are filled with repetition. One may think that by these means the disciple of old found his plastic principles slowly moulded according to the suggestions of the wise, his very reflexes made into a mirror of a knowledge not yet his, but to which he ardently aspired. Such habits, it may be, served him in moments of forgetfulness or inattention; the very principles of his nature were now deposits of memory, and acted as friendly guardians over his mind.

In the present, study which broods upon the fundamentals and their endless correlations is a similar discipline at a higher level—closer to the indwelling soul. A practice which more deliberately involves the reasoning intelligence would be the natural recommendation at a time of the further incarnation of Manas, when, as H. P. Blavatsky points out in her Messages to the American Theosophists, there comes a quickening of the mental powers. This is an evolutionary change which brings at once both greater independent perception and greater responsibility.

When we consider the scope and content of what we speak of as the "Theosophical Literature," we see that we have been supplied with the tools for consciously consolidating such an evolutionary gain. One cannot grasp the meaning of unity, study, and work—the very foundations of the Theosophical Movement—without *thinking* about them intensively. The life of the Movement depends upon continually reborn meanings—new applications—not upon explanations and formulations made once and for all. It is this thinking which takes the place of institutional strength in a free association of students. This is not, however, a random "originality," but thinking with a sense of deep allegiance to the matrices of thought that we have as examples in the work of the teachers. We think for ourselves, in order to be vital workers for the Movement, but we refresh our thought by turning again and again to the common source for all.

The methods of doing this—involving preparation for work in study-class assignments, and all the other activities a lodge affords—have been called the "lines of work." These need never seem monotonous, since the forms are simple and the resources for fresh expression and illustration well-nigh endless. Simplicity of plan always gives natural access to rich diversity when minds are intent upon making discoveries for themselves. And encouragement lies in the fact that the Movement always finds its best growth when

inquirers respond to the *philosophic* reach of the first principles of Theosophy. This is a vindication of the teaching in respect to human evolution, and a confirmation of the practical knowledge of the teachers concerning human need in this cycle of development.

One may think, here, of an application of the sixth of the six glorious virtues—*Shradda*—described as "implicit confidence on the part of the pupil in his Master's power to teach, *and his own power to learn.*" Keeping at the work of learning, sharing, conferring, helping, and pointing to the books, while maintaining classes and meetings for mutual study and to attract inquirers—what is this but the practice of the *Shradda* virtue? If human beings are indeed pilgrim-souls, if self-knowledge is the root of all other good, then a work of this sort cannot help but be, in its own way, the most important of all. It is also what students of Theosophy are *able* to do, and therefore their natural responsibility. Many other things will doubtless be accomplished for the good of the world; apparently insoluble problems will have to be met and dealt with; but the practitioner of the *shradda* virtue frets away no energy because there are tasks beyond his present capacities; he does what he can, and trusts in the Law.

Right Attitude

Devotion and aspiration will, and do, help to bring about a proper attitude of mind, and to raise the student to a higher plane; also, they secure for the student help which is unseen by him, for devotion and aspiration put the student into a condition in which aid can be given him.

What should be done is to realize that "the Master-Soul is one," with all that that implies; to know the meaning of the old teaching, "Thou art That." When this is done we may with impunity identify our consciousness with that of any thing in nature; not before. But to do this is a lifetime's work, and beforehand we have to exhaust all Karma, which means duty; we must live for others and then we will find out all we *should* know, not what we would *like* to know.

—William Q. Judge

REINCARNATION—A UNIVERSAL PROCESS

IN order to consider reincarnation as a universal process, it is helpful to think of it as one of a cluster of words having related meaning: transformation, permutation, metempsychosis, change, evolution, etc. From the ideas suggested by these words, we are led to the inference that nothing in the universe, from a grain of sand to a solar system, from an atom to a soul, remains completely unchanged from one moment to the next. Everything is in flux and reflux, ebb and flow, changing condition or circumstance.

Take our bodies. The very stuff, the material, of which they are formed was in existence before it was collected into this form, and upon the dissolution of the body the material elements will scatter; but they will not be annihilated. They will make new combinations, be built into other forms. This is "reincarnation" at the physical level. Thus, though the form is mortal, the stuff of which it is made is immortal; aggregates made up of matter are destructible, but matter itself is indestructible.

Turning to another realm of Nature, that of force, we find the same principle of transmigration working. Scientists call it the conservation of energy; but we might just as logically call it a reincarnation of the life-atoms. As the *Gita* puts it: "There is no existence for that which does not exist, nor is there any non-existence for what exists." Energy, then, cannot be destroyed, it is only transformed, as electricity into light, heat, or power. This is an aspect of "reincarnation" as a fact in Nature.

Beyond the field of forces external to us, however, lies the realm of subjective forces—our feelings, passions, and desires. Here again, we find that the constituents of the psychic nature are common property. Feelings of anger, fear, and greed are the same in every man, as are those of friendliness, kindliness, and compassion. They may be expressed differently, that is have a different "form," but the feelings are the same. What, then, happens when a "soft answer turneth away wrath"? The feeling is transformed, transmuted into a new emotion. This may be seen as reincarnation on the psychic level.

We have now applied the term "reincarnation" to matter, to force, and to the emotions; what of the realm of ideas? Here again we find the same law in operation. There is a constant stream of ideas flowing into and out of our minds, and we adopt, that is *re-embody,* those homogeneous to our natures. Our personal world of ideas is closely linked with the emotional nature; we adopt the ideas we "like" and reject those we don't like. Thus we build up a new "lower" or personal mind by picking up affinities and tendencies, and embodying them.

Over and above the personal mind, however, is the Higher Manas, the Soul, which, when the desire-nature is made impotent, gives expression to the Will. The Will is a colorless, ubiquitous force present everywhere in the universe, because everywhere there is Soul. Just as matter is a manifestation of force shaped by thought, just as force is a manifestation of feeling, and as feelings are the energy of thought, so Will lies behind the true "reincarnation" of the Soul.

The Soul cannot be defined because it gives definition to all other things. Soul is an assemblage of the life powers. It is the primary, immortal, and indestructible form of Life itself, the first "form" of Spirit—universal, beginningless, endless, changeless; the Self, that indestructible form of life which is *each* self. Granting all this, it becomes evident that a man is a soul who has passed through so many forms, so many metempsychoses in emotions and ideas, that at last he comes to the point of recognizing that he is a Self. He is not yet sure what the Self is, but he knows that he is *him*self. First identifying himself with *his* body, *his* emotions, *his* mind, he thinks of himself as separate from other selves, and acts selfishly for his own ends. But since this is working contrary to the law of Life in its universal aspect, experience obliges him to consider another view of the self.

He may begin to see that just as the material composing his body is the same as that in every other body, and that his feelings and thoughts are shared by other men, so his "self" is the same as all other "selves." Identifying now with the Self of all, he begins to look for universal principles as a basis for action, eternal Truth as the core of his convictions. Nothing else will satisfy. Striving thus, he begins the cleansing of the lower nature, enabling it to become a vehicle of the Will of all Nature. Then he realizes that he is truly an immortal Soul. As Krishna puts it in *The Bhagavad-Gita*:

> I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth; nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be. As the lord of this mortal frame experienceth therein infancy, youth, and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet the same. One who is confirmed in this belief is not disturbed by anything that may come to pass.

Every great teacher has brought us this message. It is to learn this lesson that we are souls in evolution, reincarnating time and time again until we learn it well.

A CHRISTIAN ON "REINCARNATION"

Now if every birth in the world is the birth of a new soul, I do not see how progress can ever be consummated. Each would have to begin at scratch and pass away from the life of the earth seventy or eighty years later. How can there be progress in the innermost things of the heart? We can pass on *some* wisdom and, in outward circumstances, those who follow us can in some ways go on where we left off. They will not have to re-discover electricity or atomic energy. But they *will* have to discover, for example, each for himself, the vital supremacy of love and how to master selfish desire. Each child is born a selfish little animal, surrounded, it may be, by the enlightened, but not able in character to begin where the most saintly parent left off.

How can a world progress in inner things—which are the most important—if the birth of every new generation fills the world with unregenerate souls full of untamed, animal tendencies? There can never be a perfect world unless gradually those born into it can take advantage of lessons learned in earlier lives instead of starting at scratch. . . . These thoughts make me agree with the late Dean Inge, no mean thinker, who said of the doctrine of reincarnation, "I find it both credible and attractive."

One wonders why men have so readily accepted the idea of a life *after* death and so largely, in the West, discarded the idea of a life *before* birth. So many arguments for a one-way immortality seem to me *cogent* for a two-way life outside the present body.

—LESLIE D. WEATHERHEAD

THE CHRISTIAN SCHEME

PAGAN ROOTS: *In the Beginning*

WITHOUT going very far into antiquity for comparisons, if we only stop at the fourth and fifth centuries of our era, and contrast the so-called "heathenism" of the third Neoplatonic Eclectic School with the growing Christianity, the result may not be favorable to the latter. Even at that early period, when the new religion had hardly outlined its contradictory dogmas; when the champions of the bloodthirsty Cyril knew not themselves whether Mary was to become "the Mother of God," or rank as a "demon" in company with Isis; when the memory of the meek and lowly Jesus still lingered lovingly in every Christian heart, and his words of mercy and charity vibrated still in the air, even then the Christians were outdoing the Pagans in every kind of ferocity and religious intolerance.

And if we look still farther back, and seek for examples of true *Christism,* in ages when Buddhism had hardly superseded Brahmanism in India, and the name of Jesus was only to be pronounced three centuries later, what do we find? Which of the holy pillars of the Church has ever elevated himself to the level of religious tolerance and noble simplicity of character of some heathen? Compare, for instance, the Hindu Asoka, who lived 300 B.C., and the Carthaginian St. Augustine, who flourished three centuries after Christ. According to Max Müller, this is what is found engraved on the rocks of Girnar, Dhauli, and Kapurdigiri:

"Piyadasi, the king beloved of the gods, desires that the ascetics *of all creeds* might reside in all places. All these ascetics profess alike the command which people should exercise over themselves, and the purity of the soul. *But people have different opinions and different inclinations.*"

And here is what Augustine wrote after his baptism: "Wondrous

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NOTE.—"The Christian Scheme," collated chiefly from the works of H. P. Blavatsky, recounts the historical background and early development of Christianity.

depth of thy words! whose surface, behold! is before us, inviting to little ones; yet are they a wondrous depth, O my God, a wondrous depth! It is awful to look therein; yes . . . an awfulness of honor, and a trembling of love. Thy enemies [read Pagans] thereof I *hate* vehemently; Oh, *that thou wouldst slay them* with thy two-edged sword, that they might no longer be enemies to it; for *so do I love to have them slain.*" (Translated by Prof. Draper.)

Wonderful spirit of Christianity; and that from a Manichean converted to the religion of one who even on his cross prayed for his enemies!

Who the enemies of the "Lord" were, according to the Christians, is not difficult to surmise; the few inside the Augustinian fold were His new children and favorites, who had supplanted in His affections the sons of Israel, His "chosen people." The rest of mankind were His natural foes. The teeming multitudes of heathendom were proper food for the flames of hell; the handful within the Church communion, "heirs of salvation."

But if such a proscriptive policy was just, and its enforcement was "sweet savor" in the nostrils of the "Lord," why not scorn also the Pagan rites and philosophy? Why draw so deep from the wells of wisdom, dug and filled up to brim by the same heathen? Or did the fathers, in their desire to imitate the chosen people whose time-worn shoes they were trying to fit upon their feet, contemplate the reënaction of the spoliation-scene of the Exodus? Did they propose, in fleeing from heathendom as the Jews did from Egypt, to carry off the valuables of its religious allegories, as the "chosen ones" did the gold and silver ornaments?

It certainly does seem as if the events of the first centuries of Christianity were but the reflection of the images thrown upon the mirror of the future at the time of the Exodus. During the stormy days of Irenæus, the Platonic philosophy, with its mystical submersion into Deity, was not so obnoxious after all to the new doctrine as to prevent the Christians from helping themselves to its abstruse metaphysics in every way and manner. Allying themselves with the ascetical therapeutæ—forefathers and models of the Christian monks and hermits, it was in Alexandria, let it be remembered, that they laid the first foundations of the purely Platonic trinitarian doctrine. It became the Plato-Philonean doctrine later, and such as we find it now. Plato considered the divine nature under a three-fold modification of the *First Cause*, the reason or *Logos*, and the soul

or spirit of the universe. "The three archial or original principles," says Gibbon, "were represented in the Platonic system as three Gods, united with each other by a mysterious and ineffable generation." Blending this transcendental idea with the more hypostatic figure of the *Logos* of Philo, whose doctrine was that of the oldest Kabala, and who viewed the King Messiah, as the metatron, or "the angel of the Lord," the *Legatus* descended in flesh, but not the *Ancient of Days* Himself; the Christians clothed with this mythical representation of the Mediator for the fallen race of Adam, Jesus, the son of Mary. Under this unexpected garb his personality was all but lost. In the modern Jesus of the Christian Church, we find the ideal of the imaginative Irenæus, not the adept of the Essenes, the obscure reformer from Galilee. We see him under the disfigured Plato-Philonean mask, not as the disciples heard him on the mount.

So far then the heathen philosophy had helped them in the building of the principal dogma. But when the theurgists of the third Neo-platonic school, deprived of their ancient Mysteries, strove to blend the doctrines of Plato with those of Aristotle, and by combining the two philosophies added to their theosophy the primeval doctrines of the Oriental *Kabala,* then the Christians from rivals became persecutors. Once that the metaphysical allegories of Plato were being prepared to be discussed in public in the form of Grecian dialectics, all the elaborate system of the Christian trinity would be unravelled and the divine prestige completely upset. The eclectic school, reversing the order, had adopted the inductive method; and this method became its death-knell. Of all things on earth, logic and reasonable explanations were the most hateful to the new religion of mystery; for they threatened to unveil the whole groundwork of the trinitarian conception; to apprise the multitude of the doctrine of emanations, and thus destroy the unity of the whole. It could not be permitted, and it was not. History records the *Christ*-like means that were resorted to.

The universal doctrine of emanations, adopted from time immemorial by the greatest schools which taught the kabalistic, Alexandrian, and Oriental philosophers, gives the key to that panic among the Christian fathers. That spirit of Jesuitism and clerical craft, which prompted Parkhurst, many centuries later, to suppress in his *Hebrew Lexicon* the true meaning of the first word of Genesis, originated in those days of war against the expiring Neo-platonic and eclectic school. The fathers had decided to pervert the meaning

of the word *"daimon,"*[1] and they dreaded above all to have the esoteric and true meaning of the word *Rasit* unveiled to the multitudes; for if once the true sense of this sentence, as well as that of the Hebrew word *asdt* (translated in the Septuagint *"angels,"* while it means emanations),[2] were understood rightly, the mystery of the Christian trinity would have crumbled, carrying in its downfall the new religion into the same heap of ruins with the ancient Mysteries. This is the true reason why dialecticians, as well as Aristotle himself, the "prying philosopher," were ever obnoxious to Christian theology. Even Luther, while on his work of reform, feeling the ground insecure under his feet, notwithstanding that the dogmas had been reduced by him to their simplest expression, gave full vent to his fear and hatred for Aristotle. The amount of abuse he heaped upon the memory of the great logician can only be equalled—never surpassed—by the Pope's anathemas and invectives against the liberals of the Italian government. Together, they might easily fill a copy of a new encyclopædia with models for monkish diatribes.

Of course the Christian clergy can never get reconciled with a doctrine based on the application of strict logic to discursive reasoning. The number of those who have abandoned theology on this account has never been made known. They have asked questions and been forbidden to ask them; hence, separation, disgust, and often a despairing plunge into the abyss of atheism. The Orphean views of ether as chief *medium between* God and created matter were likewise denounced. The Orphic Æther recalled too vividly the *Archeus,* the Soul of the World, and the latter was in its metaphysical sense as closely related to the emanations, being the first manifestation—Sephira, or Divine Light. And when could the latter be more feared than at that critical moment?

Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, Chalcidius, Methodius, and Maimonides, on the authority of the *Targum* of Jerusalem, the orthodox and greatest authority of the Jews, held that the first two words in the book of Genesis—B-RASIT, mean *Wisdom,* or the *Principle.* And that the idea of these words meaning *"in the beginning"* was never shared but by the profane, who were not allowed to penetrate any deeper into the esoteric sense of the sentence. Beausobre, and after him Godfrey Higgins, have demonstrated the fact. "All

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[1] "The beings which the philosophers of other peoples distinguish by the name 'Dæmons,' Moses names 'Angels'," says Philo Judæus.

[2] Deut. 33:2, *asdt* is translated "fiery law."

things," says the *Kabala,* "are derived from one great Principle, and this principle is the *unknown* and *invisible* God." From Him a substantial power immediately proceeds, which is the *image of God,* and the source of all subsequent emanations. This second principle sends forth, by the *energy* (or *will* and *force*) of emanation, other natures, which are more or less perfect, according to their different degrees of distance, in the scale of emanation, from the First Source of existence, and which constitute different worlds, or orders of being, all united to the eternal power from which they proceed. *Matter is nothing more than the most remote effect of the emanative energy* of the Deity. The material world receives its form from the immediate agency of powers far beneath the First Source of Being . . . Beausobre makes St. Augustine the Manichean say thus: 'And if by *Rasit* we understand the *active Principle* of the creation, instead of its *beginning,* in such a case we will clearly perceive that Moses never meant to say that heaven and earth were the first works of God. He only said that God created heaven and earth *through the Principle,* who is His Son. It is not the *time* he points to, but to the immediate author of the creation.' Angels, according to Augustine, were created *before* the firmament, and according to the esoteric interpretation, the heaven and earth were created after that, evolving from the *second* Principle or the Logos—the creative Deity. "The word *principle,"* says Beausobre, "does not mean that the heaven and earth were created before anything else, for, to begin with, the *angels* were created before that; but that God did everything through His Wisdom, which is His *Verbum,* and which the Christian Bible named the *Beginning,"* thus adopting the exoteric meaning of the word abandoned to the multitudes. The *Kabala*—the Oriental as well as the Jewish—shows that a number of *emanations* (the Jewish Sephiroth) issued from the *First* Principle, the chief of which was *Wisdom.* This Wisdom is the Logos of Philo, and Michael, the chief of the Gnostic Eons; it is the Ormazd of the Persians; *Minerva,* goddess of wisdom, of the Greeks, who emanated from the head of Jupiter; and the second Person of the Christian Trinity. The early Fathers of the Church had not much to exert their imagination; they found a ready-made doctrine that had existed in every theogony for thousands of years before the Christian era. Their trinity is but the trio of Sephiroth, the first three kabalistic *lights* of which Moses Nachmanides says, that *"they have never been seen by any one;* there is not any defect in them, nor any disunion."

The first eternal number is the Father, or the Chaldean primeval, invisible, and incomprehensible *chaos,* out of which proceeded the *Intelligible* one. The Egyptian Phtah, or "the *Principle of Light*—not the light itself, and the Principle of Life, though himself *no* life." The *Wisdom* by which the Father created the heavens is the *Son,* or the kabalistic androgynous Adam Kadmon. The Son is at once the male *Ra,* or Light of Wisdom, Prudence or *Intelligence,* Sephira, the female part of Himself; while from this dual being proceeds the third emanation, the Binah or Reason, the second Intelligence—the Holy Ghost of the Christians. Strictly speaking, there is a TETRAKTIS or quaternary, consisting of the Unintelligible First monad, and its triple emanation, which properly constitute our Trinity.

How then avoid perceiving at once, that had not the Christians purposely disfigured in their interpretation and translation the Mosaic Genesis to fit their own views, their religion, with its present dogmas, would have been impossible? The word Rasit, once taught in its new sense of the *Principle* and not the *Beginning,* and the anathematized doctrine of emanations accepted, the position of the second trinitarian personage becomes untenable. For, if the angels are the *first* divine emanations from the Divine Substance, and were in existence *before* the Second Principle, then the anthropomorphized *Son* is at best an emanation like themselves, and cannot be God *hypostatically* any more than our visible works are ourselves. That these metaphysical subtleties never entered into the head of the honest-minded, sincere Paul, is evident; as it is furthermore evident, that like all learned Jews he was well acquainted with the doctrine of emanations and never thought of corrupting it. How can any one imagine that Paul identified the *Son* with the *Father,* when he tells us that God made Jesus "a *little lower* than the angels" (*Hebrews* ii. 9), and a *little higher* than Moses! "For this MAN was counted worthy of more glory than Moses" (Heb. 3:3). Of whatever, or how many forgeries, interlined later in the Acts, the Fathers are guilty we know not; but that Paul never considered Christ more than a man "full of the Spirit of God" is but too evident: "In the *arche* was the *Logos,* and the Logos was adnate to the Theos."

Wisdom, the first emanation of En-Soph; the Protogonos, the Hypostasis; the Adam Kadmon of the kabalist, the Brahma of the Hindu; the Logos of Plato, and the *"Beginning"* of St. John is the Rasit of the Book of Genesis. If rightly interpreted it overturns, as we have remarked, the whole elaborate system of Christian the-

ology, for it proves that behind the *creative* Deity, there was a HIGHER god; a planner, an architect; and that the former was but His executive agent—a simple POWER!

They persecuted the Gnostics, murdered the philosophers, and burned the kabalists and the masons; and when the day of the great reckoning arrives, and the light shines in darkness, what will they have to offer in the place of the departed, expired religion? What will they answer, these pretended monotheists, these worshippers and *pseudo*-servants of the one living God, to their Creator? How will they account for this long persecution of them who were the true followers of the grand Megalistor, the supreme great master of the Rosicrucians, the FIRST of masons? "For he is the Builder and Architect of the Temple of the universe; He is the *Verbum Sapienti.*"[3]

"Every one knows," wrote the great Manichean of the third century, Fauste, "that the Evangeliums were written neither by Jesus Christ, nor his apostles, but long after their time by some unknown persons, who, judging well that they would hardly be believed when telling of things they had not seen themselves, headed their narratives with the names of the apostles or of disciples contemporaneous with the latter."

Commenting upon the subject, A. Franck, the learned Hebrew scholar of the Institute and translator of the *Kabala,* expresses the same idea. "Are we not authorized," he asks, "to view the *Kabala* as a precious remnant of religious philosophy of the Orient, which, transported into Alexandria, got mixed to the doctrine of Plato, and under the usurped name of Dionysius the Areopagite, bishop of Athens, converted and consecrated by St. Paul, was thus enabled to penetrate into the mysticism of the mediæval ages?"

Says Jacolliot: "What is then this religious philosophy of the Orient, which has penetrated into the mystic symbolism of Christianity? We answer: This philosophy, the traces of which we find among the Magicians, the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, the Hebrew kabalists and the Christians, is none other than that of the Hindu Brahmans, the sectarians of the *pitris,* or the spirits of the invisible worlds which surround us."

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[3] "The altogether mystical coloring of Christianity harmonized with the Essene rules of life and opinions, and it is not improbable that Jesus and John the Baptist were initiated into the Essene Mysteries, to which Christianity may be indebted for many a form of expression; as indeed the community of Therapeutæ, an offspring of the Essene order, soon belonged wholly to Christianity" (*Yost* i, 411—quoted by the author of *Sod, the Son of the Man*).

letters • questions • comment

"The purpose of life is to learn" is a statement, practically a mantram, that is repeated again and again in Theosophical meetings. This has always seemed to be a cold approach to life and a rather bleak introduction to Theosophy. Why is so much more emphasis placed on learning, in Theosophy, than on living?

This is a misconception, possibly due to the fact that for Theosophists learning and living are synonymous terms. So, if Theosophists repeat this statement—as the inquirer seems to suggest, *ad nauseum*—it is because they are convinced of its truth and efficacy as a directive. Possibly the inquirer is, consciously or unconsciously, confining "learning" to intellectual activity, book knowledge, or what he can learn through words written or spoken by others. But is this what is meant by "the purpose of life is to learn"? We think it means simply that learning is an intrinsic part of living.

Man, being essentially a Knower, a Perceiver, cannot help learning. The very circumstances of his life force him to learn, however slowly; for time and again he has to meet the results of his actions, reap the karma of his thoughts, and plan his course anew. Willy-nilly, he must learn eventually, though it may take pain and suffering throughout many lives to make him a *willing* learner, a seeker after truth.

But a learner presupposes a teacher, and, since the cycle of evolutionary progress was already bringing into incarnation many egos who would be eager for truth, a teacher was provided in the person of H. P. Blavatsky. All serious students of Theosophy acknowledge her as "the Teacher," and grant William Q. Judge and Robert Crosbie the roles which they exemplified in their lives as colleagues and co-workers. When Theosophists study the more abstruse aspects of the philosophy, they are trying to learn *why* it is necessary to harmonize their living. Every committed Theosophist has as his goal "living the life." He learns to "snatch at the lessons that come to him," thus accelerating his progress. But his progress is not an ultimate concern; rather it is arousing the perceptive and intuitive

faculties of mankind—the Buddhi-Manas of the race. So in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (pp. 60-61), Mr. Judge describes the far-reaching fulfillment of right living:

> What then is the universe for, and for what final purpose is man the immortal thinker here in evolution? It is all for the experience and emancipation of the soul, for the purpose of raising the entire manifested matter up to the stature, nature, and dignity of conscious god-hood. The great aim is to reach self-consciousness; not through a race or a tribe or some favored nation, but by and through the perfecting, after transformation, of the whole mass of matter as well as what we now call soul. Nothing is or is to be left out. The aim for present man is his initiation into complete knowledge, and for the other kingdoms below him that they may be raised up gradually from stage to stage to be in time initiated also. This is evolution carried to its highest power; it is a magnificent prospect; it makes of man a god, and gives to every part of nature the possibility of being one day the same; there is strength and nobility in it, for by this no man is dwarfed and belittled, for no one is so originally sinful that he cannot rise above all sin.

This puts learning on a level higher than mere intellection. It shows that the "learning" a Theosophist is concerned with is *soul* learning. Another frequently repeated statement is apropos here: "Theosophy is the science of life and the art of living." This is equivalent to saying that there are Laws of Life which all may learn to live by. Theosophy presents these laws and explains their dynamics. It teaches how to live a life that is worth living. Many of H.P.B.'s articles and the majority of Mr. Judge's are practical "how to" prescriptions for living. They are not addressed primarily to the intellect, but to the heart and intuition. All "how to" books are counsels for the learning experience: they show how to correct mistakes and how to prevent future errors; they tell of the steps taken by others who have solved the same problems we now face.

The letters of William Q. Judge and Robert Crosbie are replete with practical suggestions and advice for *living* the Theosophic life. No matter how hard we try, we are still novices in the art of living, and are thus bound to fail at times; yet *as* we try, as we begin to live in harmony with our fellows, in balance with ourselves, in accordance with the *fact* of Universal Brotherhood, and the laws of our essential being, we become ever more proficient practitioners.

Living and learning go hand in hand. Mr. Crosbie speaks directly to this point:

> When we come to consider that the purpose of life is to learn and that it is all made up of learning, the circumstances by means of which we learn become of minor importance.
>
> If we could just take conditions as they come and make the best of them, other "bests" would follow, and all worry, fear, doubt, and anxiety would depart. The Law works just and true: "What has been, *is*, and shall be." We have power over nothing but the *"is."* It is by working with present conditions that the nature of the future is changed, and in no other way. This is reliance upon the Law, and a working under it. The various conditions that confront are opportunities, and means, afforded us to increase our discrimination, strength and knowledge; having created these conditions, seeing what is undesirable in them, we go to work to change our direction of creative thought and our relation to the undesirable. . . . Even those who repeat errors life after life are in the process of learning, for evolution makes for righteousness, being an unfoldment from within.

Nor are novices or even proficient craftsmen in the art of living confined to Theosophists. H.P.B. makes this clear in her *First Message* to the American Theosophists, when she says:

> Many who have never heard of the Society are Theosophists without knowing it themselves; for the essence of Theosophy is the perfect harmonizing of the divine with the human in man, the adjustment of his god-like qualities and aspirations, and their sway over the terrestrial or animal passions in him. Kindness, absence of every ill feeling or selfishness, charity, good-will to all beings and perfect justice to others as to one's self, are its chief features. He who teaches Theosophy preaches the gospel of good-will; and the converse is true also—he who preaches the gospel of good-will, teaches Theosophy.

This is *living* the Theosophic life, for "Theosophist *is* who Theosophy *does*."

In practice, this brings in another dimension of the living-learning process—Love, which, ever widening its circle, becomes Compassion, "the *Law* of Laws." Living-Learning-Loving provide the triune dynamics of soul growth, and their complete, harmonious, universal expression fulfills the purpose of Life.

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE

II.

THE votaries of Religions that preach salvation only through the acceptance of their dogmas must inevitably be more or less animated by the proselytising spirit, and the more pretentious the claims of power to save by the inculcation of orthodox opinion, the more urgent must appear the necessity to spread those opinions as widely as possible. Indeed it seems imperative on one who holds such a faith in his heart of hearts, that he should spend his life in trying to spread it.

But when the true philosophic thought is attained and the law of Karma with its infinite ramifications realized as the all pervading power, how vain will seem all attempts to control or even deeply affect the destiny of others. Truly Occultism teaches the widest tolerance, and though its student will doubtless as formerly try to influence all who are brought into contact with him in his journey through life, and if possible instil into them the thoughts that actuate him and give his life a definite purpose, yet will he realize that over his own life alone has he paramount power. He may exercise his worldly wisdom as the sower of seed, may avoid what is most patently the rocky or the thorny ground, but he will gradually learn to cease to look for results from even the most promising, and will rise more and more on the wings of devotion to the true giver of the increase.

While therefore it is a subject for satisfaction if the Theosophical Society should indeed prove to be the dawn of that better hope for mankind, the nucleus of that Universal Brotherhood which shall overspread all lands and which shall plant in the hearts of men the Science-Religion along whose lines will move the spiritual progress of all future Humanity, yet as a Society it can scarcely be expected to be free from the imperfections inherent in all organization, which being of the earth is necessarily earthly—and after all it is a matter of very small moment in what form truth is given to the world. This

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NOTE.—This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in the *Path* for March, 1887.

only is certain that truth must advance, that no man can stay the wheel of evolution—that the Divine Wisdom which we believe animates us will one day be recognized by all mankind as the only solution of the problem of the Universe, and as the guide to Life Eternal.

And Destiny will not be hurried—spite of our impatience—any more than she can be retarded. The evil Karma of the World must work itself out. The unclean man let him be unclean still, let him measure every depth of vice and taste of every spring of passion till the hour strikes for him also and his painful upward progress has to begin. So have the Rishis done who went before us, so have we done in past existences, indeed we may have but extricated ourselves from the slough, and the mire may still be clinging to our feet. For no man can transcend experience, and all earthly places, foul and clean alike, must be trodden by him. Nor when the words or acts of others come into direct antagonism with our own personality, any more than when the cruelty and injustice in the world at large are brought painfully before us, shall we continue to blame the actors, or allow the old prejudices "with their lurid colourings of passion" to dominate us any longer, for the true philosophic thought will have taught us to recognize that all acts are but the result of the "Three Qualities" blended in infinite combination—the great Karma of the World working itself out.

The deeper one looks into this Western Civilization of ours, and the more one realizes in what degrading depths its masses are sunk, in what heartless frivolity so many of the more opulent spend their lives, and in what superstitious intolerance its so-called Religious World moves, it seems indeed a forlorn hope to attempt to carry conviction of the Occult Truth or expect a wide-spread acceptance of it. But though this age of Darkness may exhibit an appalling depth of materiality, yet in all ages of the world, the blind multitude are many and the lovers of Wisdom few. And indeed this love of Wisdom is no light attainment, but one for which the soul has been educated through life times of experience and paroxysms of pain, for while the gratification of any of the senses still continues to give supreme satisfaction, there is no room in the soul for Theosophic thought. Not until by the slow education of repeated experience it is realized that the senses can no longer satisfy, that even the higher joys of communion with one's kind—though culminating in the ideal union of two souls—are but steps in the ladder to the Supreme

Thought, can any true idea of the Divine Wisdom have been formed. Indeed a time will come for the student when the gratification of the senses will actually cause pain. It may be ushered in for one through the sense of sight, when the most beautiful scenery of earth, and the most perfect combinations of mountain, wood and water only accentuate by their faint reflex the passionate desire for that land which no eye hath seen, that land which no eye can see. Or the symphonies of earthly music which once enthralled the soul may raise the longing for the song of the celestial choir to that ecstatic point where it becomes unrecognisable from pain. And so the student is driven inward to find at last his refuge in pure Thought, and he begins to perceive that the Eternal World of ideas is the only real World, the only one in which pure Being is to be found, and that this phenomenal existence is indeed but the circling of the nets of delusion, the restless tossing of the false salt waves of sense which reward "with droughts that double thirst" the deluded souls that float on them.

The more the student lives in this ideal world, the more will he find that the association with those whose interests are exclusively centered on earthly things becomes repugnant to him, and that even the calls of duty to descend from the tranquil heights of Thought, to the jarring discord of action in the world, are responded to with increasing pain, though duty in such cases is likely to be in process of changing her sphere of action. When the inner struggles of one still bound by ties of earth suggest such thoughts as these, surely the isolation from contact with the rude world of the most spiritual men, those who have achieved the sublime heights of Mahatmaship, is no longer a thing to wonder at, but becomes apparent as an absolute necessity.

The desires above referred to of seeing the invisible, and realizing the divine, will probably if practised continuously enough, and with sufficient intensity, be the prelude to some partial lifting of the veil, when the ecstatic may reap in a moment of beatific vision more than he ever dreamed of, and receive accretion of strength for the coming years, though this is more likely to be the immediate reward of some supreme self-devotion whether in act or thought, and when the words of Krishna, "near to renunciation—very near—dwelleth eternal peace" will flash upon the soul as truth that requires no word of mortal man to give it authority.

But woe to the man who unduly cultivates his spiritual faculties without being a complete master of his lower nature—the beast be-

low will turn and rend him some day—the little bit of lust unconquered may be the means of his complete undoing. For as his astral consciousness develops his whole being intensifies, including the small unconquered part of his physical nature, which he will then have to fight upon the Astral plane, in far more terrible struggle than had he conquered on the physical. It becomes in fact what is symbolically known as the "Dweller on the threshold" that has to be fought and conquered before the neophyte can aspire to gain the first glimmering of vision on the true spiritual plane. For it must always be remembered that our nature is threefold, "body, soul and spirit" as the initiate St. Paul expressed it, and until the personality has transferred all its forces unto the soul plane, it cannot expect to attain to that of spirit. From this it will be evident how necessary it is to live more and more continuously in the Eternal Thought until all fleshly appetites and desires of sense die off by sheer inanition.

The vague dreams with which life began, and which the child with memories fresh from "that imperial palace whence he came" pictured in a material way of a golden city with walls of jasper and with gates of pearl, and into which no unclean thing was permitted to enter, are lost for a while in the frenzied rush of youth and early manhood, but maturer years bring them back with an added pathos and a more spiritualized meaning. It is indeed the Golden city we all seek for—"the city that hath foundations whose builder and whose maker is God."

PILGRIM

NO THOUGHT IS AN ISLAND

The sense of meaning is not born in ease and sloth. It comes after bitter trials. . . . Thought is not free apart from experience or from inner surroundings. Thinking is living, and no thought is bred in an isolated cell in the brain. No thought is an island.

We think with all faculties; our entire living is involved in our thinking. Thus our way of thinking is affected by our way of living, and contemplation is the distillation of one's entire existence. Thinking is a summing up of the truth of our own living.

—ABRAHAM HESCHEL

on the lookout

The God-Believers

The general movement of thought toward religion without dogma is illustrated by a passage in Bishop James A. Pike's recent book, *If This Be Heresy,* quoted in the *Saturday Review* for Sept. 16. Dr. Pike writes:

> The God-believers are shown to be more unethical in direct proportion to their orthodoxy. But an obvious explanation comes to mind: It is not that the firmness of belief in God is the *cause* of closed, judgmental, hating personality deformity. Rather, persons like that are the ones more likely to believe in God, more likely to cling to the supports belief in God represents. This is more starkly evident at the extreme end of the spectrum in orthodoxy: here we have a high proportion of insecure, exclusivist, xenophobic, in-group types who are internally frightened about the removal, or even the shifting, of any of their small props.

Such revelations grow out of the application of social science to the field of organized religion, and it is inevitable that honest clergymen should recognize and declare the moral significance of these findings, and their critical bearing on orthodox belief.

Quality of "Religious Attachment"

Discussion of recent research in the September *Trans-action* reports similar conclusions. Noticing a paper by Gordon W. Allport and J. Michael Roos in the April *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* the reviewer writes:

> The Christian religion bids its followers to "love thy neighbor as thyself," but social science research has long shown that churchgoers, as a group, are more prejudiced against strangers —Jews, Negroes, hippies, etc.—than people who don't go to church. Yet surely religion is a force that motivates some believers, from Gandhi to Martin Luther King, to extraordinary expressions of concern for all their fellow men; and studies have also shown a substantial minority of regular churchgoers who are *more* tolerant than the general population. The difference

seems to lie in the quality of the religious attachment: roughly speaking, people whose religious practice is motivated by extrinsic factors like sociability and conformity ("What religion offers me most is comfort when sorrows and misfortune strike") are less tolerant than non-attenders; while people with an intrinsic involvement in religion ("My religious beliefs are what really lie behind my whole approach to life") are more tolerant than most people.

"Use" of Religion

Most prejudiced of all among those studied by Allport and Roos were people who were vaguely and indiscriminately "pro-religious":

> Within the indiscriminately pro-religious group, the amount of prejudice varied directly with the extent of the confusion; there seems to be a direct relation between religious muddle-headedness and intolerance. Allport and Roos concluded that the extrinsically religious are prejudiced because they use both religion and ethnic hostility in the same way—as a means of providing security and a sense of belonging. The indiscriminately pro-religious are intolerant for another reason; they suffer from a sloppy cognitive style, characterized by an inability to make fine distinctions. The kind of mind that concludes that "religion is all O.K." is also the kind of mind that readily accepts the over-generalized stereotypes of prejudice.

As this sort of reflective analysis penetrates serious thought about religion, the familiar formulations of faith in terms of creed are certain to die away, to be replaced by more philosophical and existential convictions and conceptions of religious truth. These seem inevitable consequences of the awakening of mind in this cycle. People who are prejudiced and who accept the dogmas of religion simply do not think—or, as the *Trans-action* reviewer put it, "they suffer from a sloppy cognitive style."

The Christian Scene

Possibly nothing shows more clearly the breakdown of Christian dogmas than the widely varying views on heaven and hell now held by American theologians. From twenty-four opinions collected, a *Time* writer (May 19) concludes:

> Many theologians are now attempting to redefine heaven and hell in this-wordly terms—not as places where humans somehow survive after death, but as states of mind and modes of being that begin here on earth. As they see it, the world itself is the supreme opportunity for man's fulfillment and salvation, and the afterlife a "spiritual dimension" that emphasizes the noblest traits

and aspirations of this life. . . . Except among some fundamentalists, the concept of a three-tier universe with heaven above, hell below and mankind in the middle struggling for divine judgment is recognized as a complete distortion of God's cryptic revelation on eternity.

In the new eschatology, hell is something more believable than a pit of unending fire. To most theologians, the inferno is best expressed as alienation from God's universal design, and therefore from one's fellow men. . . . Conversely, heaven is now defined as the triumph of self-giving—not as some celestial leisure village. Heaven is cordial, honest, loving relationships.

No Sustained Philosophy

The demythologizing of heaven and hell affects related ideas, such as "the last judgment." On this subject, says *Time,* "many theologians retreat into agnosticism." Regarding the afterlife, one theologian feels that "if man is sufficiently fulfilled on earth, we can leave it to Jesus to worry about the details." Another suggests that "the Gospel offers a message for this life. If, by some chance, we should discover ourselves still conscious after death, we will probably receive a new set of instructions." More extended opinions include:

The phenomenon involves the ongoing life of the whole person, not of the body in the physical sense, but of something equivalent to what that body is, a notion of renewal rather than of survival, in ways that we cannot know. (Paul Schilling, Methodist.)

Since I conceive of myself as a consciousness which is open to others in love, I feel fairly certain that I will be able to think and to love in the next life. If this requires space, then there will be space. If it requires time there will be time. I'm not so sure that it requires either. (Paul Hilsdale, Loyola University.)

There is greater equanimity in facing death's reality if what you are looking forward to in the next life is an extension of and a deepening of the value you find in this life. (William J. Wolf, Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge.)

The alternative of reincarnation was not raised by any of the theologians interviewed. Yet, without the philosophical tenets of karma and reincarnation, bringing the perspective of life after life, each with its intervening after-death states, there can be no self-compelling basis for the ethical life preached by exponents of Christianity. Each man but surmises the conditions that suit his temperament.

New Light on Bible Texts

For nearly twenty years, says the Los Angeles *Times* (Aug. 8),

members of a committee of American and British scholars have been scrutinizing ancient Greek, Latin, Syriac, and Coptic manuscripts of the Gospels, and comparing them with the King James Bible in order to locate interpolations or omissions in the authorized version. Dr. Ernest C. Colwell of Claremont, head of the committee, says that very little was left out, but several instances of addition have been discovered. For example, the twelve-line episode at the end of the story of the woman caught in adultery does not appear in manuscripts until the sixth century; and the words "take up thy cross" in Mark 10:21, and "take up his cross" in Mark 8:34, do not appear in earlier Greek texts. These read simply, "whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and follow me." Several other evidences of interpolation are shown.

Already, the Revised Standard Version has omitted some of this questionable material, and it is probable, says Dr. Colwell, that—

> People accustomed to the long form, such as the King James version, might feel future translations would be leaving things out, whereas the purpose is to reduce the number of additions to the original text that crept into the manuscripts. Most evidence we've uncovered supports the shorter form of the New Testament as the original.

Searchlight on Genesis

Another study (reported in the Los Angeles *Times,* June 15) is described by Dr. Loren R. Fisher, also of Claremont. Dr. Fisher's work adds weight to a recent translation of the Torah which renders the familiar phrase "In the beginning God created" as "When God began to create." Further, the first chapter of Genesis is very similar in form, though not in content, to non-Hebrew tablets dating back to 1500 B.C., which have been excavated in the ancient Syrian city of Ugarit. These tablets describe a seven-day ceremony giving first the circumstance, then the action, and third the time—as day one, day two, etc. This suggests to Dr. Fisher that "the material in Genesis 1 was originally preserved in ritual form," for—

> The literal translation of the Hebrew is "day one," rather than "first day" or "one day" as given in Bibles. The expression "day one" occurs only a few times in the Bible, but never to set off a series of days as we have in Genesis. "Day one" also is the exact expression used in the Ugaritic text.
>
> These Ugaritic texts help us to understand what Hebrews accepted from their neighbors and what they changed. They came into Canaan and used that language and literary style, and used

enthronement songs for their creator-king. I don't think it is possible for it to be the other way around because the Ugaritic material dates from the fifteenth and fourteenth centuries B.C., and the Hebrews don't have their beginnings as a nation until the time of Moses in the thirteenth century B.C., about the time of the end of the Ugaritic culture.

Christian Parochialism Decried

In addition to researches on the Bible, which show how much was borrowed from more ancient religions, the interest in comparative religion is giving people a truer perspective on Christianity. The Ottowa *Citizen* (June 7) presents the views of Dr. George Grant, of McMaster University (Hamilton), as expressed before the Royal Society of Canada. The *Citizen* says:

> He [Dr. Grant] told the society that departments of religion should look deeply into Eastern religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism because a good comparison of religions is impossible among Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, all of which are derived from the same Semitic roots. He condemned comparative religion courses that quickly survey all other religions while concentrating on Western religion.

Dr. Grant is quoted:

> They [Eastern religions] are generally taught with the assumption of Western superiority, either the religious superiority of Christianity, or more recently the cultural superiority of the progressive West. Western superiority is not the best stance from which the religious phenomena of the world can be understood.

Reincarnation—Case Report

A pamphlet by Francis Story and Dr. Ian Stevenson (reprinted from the April *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*) details an investigation of what Dr. Stevenson calls "the reincarnation type child" in Ceylon, at a time shortly after the main events relating to it occurred. Warnasiri Adikari, who was born near Colombo, Ceylon, in November, 1957, told his father when he was about four years old of a previous life in a village some six miles away. There followed the usual confrontation with places and persons, many of whom Warnasiri recognized. The unusual feature of this case, however, lies in the fact that—

> Warnasiri said he could recall three previous lives anterior to his present one as Warnasiri. He believed that prior to his birth as Warnasiri, he incarnated briefly in the infant baby of his own mother, Mrs. Roslin Nona in 1956; prior to that he lived as

> Ananda in Kimbulgoda, and prior to that he lived in Kelaniya and died in a boating accident. To his father, Warnasiri has several times expressed disgust with being reborn again and again and resolves to become a monk and make an end of it all.

To this passage the following note is appended: "Buddhism teaches that release from the cycle of death and rebirth can be attained only by the development of non-attachment to the elements of sensory experience. The release from desire for the unrealities of incarnated existence may be sought and achieved in meditation which Buddhist monks practice and teach."

Mental Control Poses Ethical Problems

New techniques for controlling behavior—electrodes embedded in the brain and chemicals which stimulate or repress brain activity —are forcing doctors to consider the moral and social implications involved.

A column in the *Milwaukee Journal* (Nov. 20, 1966) brings together results of various experiments conducted throughout the United States. Many researchers were enthusiastic about the results, while others were wary. Dr. Lawrence Pinneo, of Tulane University, for example, asks: "Does it make better sense to electrocute or hang a man for a crime, or to turn him into a productive, useful citizen by implanting electrodes in his brain?" And Dr. David Krech, of the University of California, counters: "If—or rather, when—brain research becomes applicable in human beings, who will grapple with the questions of ethics and morals and the social good? Whose is the ultimate responsibility?"

The *Journal* columnist emphasizes the seriousness of the problem by recalling that

> Some ten years ago, atomic physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer warned that scientists who work with the mind would face responsibilities greater than the men who fashioned the atomic bomb. "It opens up," Oppenheimer said, "the most terrifying prospect of controlling what people do and how they think and how they behave and how they feel."

Ethical Concern Sustained

A group of scientists, a philosopher, and a judge, brought together by the American College of Physicians to discuss the social implications and moral problems of therapeutic abortion and the use of experimental drugs (particularly the "get smart" drugs) on

human beings failed (according to the Los Angeles *Times,* May 1) "to find mutually agreeable answers but did succeed in outlining the complexity of these problems." Dr. Irving Wright, president of ACP, observed:

> We have come up against the same problems that baffled the Egyptian, Hindu, Greek, Roman and all other civilizations that in the past made material progress. Time and again this has proven to be the turning point in the history of a civilization, and many are the material advances that have been lost through the centuries. Broadly, these failures seem to be related to the inability of man to live according to philosophical, moral and ethical codes that stand the tests of time.

One point emerged from the discussion of "get smart" drugs: some chemicals work on some animals and not on others, and even when they seem effective this is only in respect to the dullest animals; they do not make already-smart animals smarter. Dr. Krech again raised a cautionary voice against using these on human beings:

> Who would decide whether the drug should be used? Who would decide who would receive it? What would be the criteria?
>
> You will inevitably become involved. But doctors have neither the wisdom nor the knowledge to handle this—they can't be allowed to write social policy on a prescription pad.

From a theosophical point of view, it is obvious that no one, individually, nor society, collectively, has the right to make such a decision for another. Nor, indeed, has any individual the wisdom to make that decision for himself.

Unanswered Question

The "philosopher" member of the panel brought together by the American College of Physicians to participate in this discussion, Prof. Samuel Stumpf, made the most pertinent remark: "Eventually you are driven back to what it means to be a human being." Thus, at last, is raised the question that ought to have been asked in the beginning. But the beginnings of the various sciences contributing to the problems under consideration did not start with this question, have not considered it seriously, and may not, even now, give it attention, despite the disorders and dilemmas which exist and the worse ones feared for the future.

Yet Dr. Wright, in introducing the question, spoke wisely of the present as "a turning point in the history of a civilization," and it

may be that other voices, added to his, will produce what H. P. Blavatsky called a "ninth wave of common sense," bringing scientists to reconsider their inverted methods and views. Meanwhile, the question of "What it means to be a human being" is asked with increasing urgency on all fronts of our troubled and harassed civilization. The break-through that would solve many problems would be serious attention to the doctrine of reincarnation and to the triple evolutionary scheme outlined on pages 181-82 of the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. Meanwhile, hungered wondering about the question itself may help to create the atmosphere which is required before the occult doctrine will be able to gain a hearing.

What Price Speed?

To the hazards of noise (THEOSOPHY 55:349) should be added those of the percussion of supersonic transport, according to a Los Angeles *Times* interview (Aug. 10) with Prof. Karl Ruppenthal. "By far the biggest problem," this Stanford professor says, "is that of sonic booms [which] threaten literally to shake the world." A Swedish aviation expert is quoted as predicting that "every SST flight across the United States will lay down a 'boom carpet' assaulting the ear drums of ten million people and terrifying millions more."

The shock of sonic booms varies somewhat with the size of the aircraft, but, reports Prof. Ruppenthal, "already a comparatively small military plane created a sonic boom that broke off eighty tons of rock and buried prehistoric cliff dwellings in Mesa Verde National Park. Sandstone formations in Bryce Canyon and Zion National Park have been reduced to dusty rubble by sonic booms." He therefore concludes that "if the SST goes ahead we can expect irreparable damage on a really grand scale." Because of the sonic booms:

> Both the governments of Germany and Switzerland have said already they will forbid SST flights over their territories if their populations find them to be annoyances. It is almost certain that cities like Paris, Florence, Rome and Athens, and many less venerable cities as well, will outlaw SST flights within their jurisdictions. Such restrictions will substantially reduce the economic benefits to be expected from the development of the SST. It may be that the larger SST planes will be limited to flying over the oceans.

Despite all this, the U.S. has already "pumped" $700,000,000 into the development of supersonic planes, and even now the end

is not in sight. The Franco-British Concorde, which will fly at twice the speed of sound, is scheduled to go into service in 1971, but the American SST, which will fly at three times the speed of sound, is not considered possible before 1975 at the earliest. However, America will finally be there with the heaviest, the fastest, and the mostest—regardless of the effect on man and nature, or even on the aircraft industry itself.

"Ecological Crisis"

In a portion of his article in *Science* for March 10 not noticed in Lookout's (August) reference to him, Lynn White, professor of history at the University of California in Los Angeles, described the roots of the modern ecological crisis as lying in Christian tradition. "In absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia's religions," Prof. White wrote, Christianity "insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends." The terrible intrusion of noise is surely another instance of lack of respect for nature, now reaching such destructive proportions that not only naturalists, but every sort of scholar and professional concerned with life-processes is raising his voice in protest. In one place, Prof. White says:

> Both our present science and our present technology are so tinctured with orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature that no solution for our ecological crisis can be expected from them alone. Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious. We must rethink and refeel our nature and destiny.

Apparently, the "feedback" (a technological term for Karma) of ruthless technological progress is causing a fundamental reassessment of the basic assumptions of Western civilization.

Man-Made Virus

A virus, labeled T-4, has been put together by Robert Edgar and William Wood, biologists at Caltech. (Los Angeles *Times,* May 19.) Although a virus is the simplest form of life, T-4 is the most complex virus yet produced in the laboratory, and the process of assembly was much more complicated than had been expected. When one tries to realize that T-4 is only 1/100,000 of an inch long, the following description of its constitution seems fantastic. From the *Times*:

> Their research indicates that each step in the assembly of a virus is controlled by a separate gene. At least eight genes are involved in building the basic head of the new virus, with eight

> more making proteins that put the finishing touches on the head. These latter probably make the neck and collar section, two other distant parts of the virus. Two other genes make the head capable of being attached to the tail. Twenty genes go to make the molecule of DNA that fits inside the head. Fifteen are used in making the endplate, a part of the tail, and three others are used for the sheath, which finishes the tail.

By inactivating some of the hundred genes in the virus' DNA, Edgar was able to create mutations with incomplete virus parts; yet "when these incomplete viruses are mixed in a test tube, they assemble themselves to become complete viruses capable of reproducing in another host cell." Like all viruses, T-4 is a parasite and lives by squirting DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) into unprotected host cells. DNA is the substance in the nucleus of every living cell that gives the cell its individuality, and determines heredity.

Thus science may have fulfilled one prophecy made somewhere in theosophical writings—that in this century life would be created in a test tube. But scientists seem to be trying to understand life piecemeal, whereas "it can never be grasped so long as it is studied separately and apart from universal life."

Buckminster Fuller on Telepathy

R. Buckminster Fuller, originator of the geodesic dome which houses the display of the United States at Expo 67, is a philosophical engineer. He teaches Design Science at the University of Southern Illinois and is now engaged in completing an inventory of the material resources of the entire world. His personal activity is an attempt to inspire architectural students everywhere to devote their energies to designing the means to place these resources within the reach of all human beings. With the abundance now possible, Mr. Fuller believes that putting an end to war is a technical design problem, not a political problem. Universal plenty is a clear potentiality of the present, he points out, and if brought to all people it would make war obsolete.

His keynote address at the Vision 65 Conference two years ago at the University of Southern Illinois spoke of the vast advances in electronics in recent years, and of the extraordinary opportunities of the immediate future. Early in his address he said:

> . . . do not shudder or feel me to be over-daring when I say . . . that possibly within the next decade we will have discovered that what we have always spoken of in the past as telepathy is in fact

ultra, ultra high frequency electro-magnetic wave propagation. We may find that we are doing a great deal more subconscious communicating with one another than we are accomplishing in the "reality" of the visually tunable ranges of the electro-magnetic spectrum. That is one reason why I do not prepare and read or memorize my lectures. I prefer to think my way along in front of my audience, speaking my thoughts as they occur. I am confident that my spoken thoughts are greatly affected by sub-conscious feedback from my audience.

America's Ethnic Heritage

A comparatively unknown letter by Walt Whitman came to Lookout recently, and since it has interesting correlations with statements made by William Q. Judge, in his article "On the Future: A Few Reflections," we reproduce it almost entire. The poet had been invited to attend and read a poem at the 333rd anniversary of the founding of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Unable to do this, he wrote the following to mark the occasion:

> We Americans have yet to really learn our own antecedents, and sort them, to unify them. They will be found ampler than has been supposed, and in widely different sources. Thus far, impressed by New England writers and schoolmasters, we tacitly abandon ourselves to the notion that our United States have been fashioned from the British Islands only, and essentially form a second England only—which is a very great mistake. Many leading traits for our future National Personality, and some of the best ones, will certainly prove to have originated from other than British stock. As it is, the British and German, valuable as they are in the concrete, already threaten excess. Or, rather, I should say, they have certainly reached that excess. Today, something outside of them, and to counterbalance them, is seriously needed.

Promise of Change

> The seething materialistic and business vortices of the United States, in their present devouring relations, controlling and belittling everything else, are, in my opinion, but a vast and indispensable stage in the New World's development, and are certainly to be followed by something entirely different—at least by immense modifications. Character, literature, a society worthy the name, are yet to be established, through a Nationality of noblest spiritual, heroic and democratic attributes—not one of which at present definitely exists—entirely different from the past, though unerringly founded on it and to justify it.
>
> To that composite American identity of the future, Spanish character will supply some of the most needed parts. No stock

shows a grander historic retrospect—grander in religiousness and loyalty, or for patriotism, courage, decorum, gravity and honor. (It is time to dismiss utterly the illusion-compound, half raw-head-and-bloody-bones and half Mysteries-of-Udolpho, inherited from the English writers of the past two hundred years. It is time to realize—for it is certainly true—that there will not be found any more cruelty, tyranny, superstition, &c in the resumé of past Spanish history, than in the corresponding resumé of Anglo-Norman history. Nay, I think there will not be found so much.)

Indian Contribution

Then another point, relating to American ethnology, past and to come, I will here touch upon at a venture. As to our aboriginal or Indian population—the Aztec in the south, and many a tribe in the north and west—I know it seems to be agreed that they must gradually dwindle as time rolls on, and in a few generations more, leave only a reminiscence, a blank. But I am not at all clear about that. As America, from its many far-back sources and current supplies, develops, adapts, entwines, faithfully identifies its own—are we to see it cheerfully accepting and using all the contributions of foreign lands from the whole outside globe —and then rejecting the only ones distinctively its own—the autochthonic ones?

As to the Spanish stock of our Southwest, it is certain to me that we do not begin to appreciate the splendor and sterling value of its race element. Who knows but that element, like the course of some subterranean river, dipping invisibly for a hundred or two years, is now to emerge in broadest flow and permanent action?

If I might assume to do so, I would like to send you the most cordial, heartfelt, respectful congratulations of your American fellow-countrymen here. You have more friends in the Northern and Atlantic regions than you suppose, and they are deeply interested in the development of the great Southwestern interior, and in what your festival would arouse to public attention.

Very respectfully

July 20, 1883 WALT WHITMAN